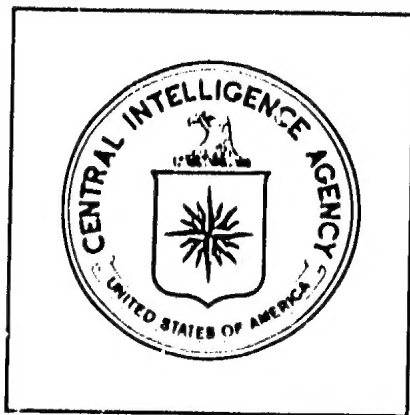


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## STAFF NOTES:

# Latin American Trends

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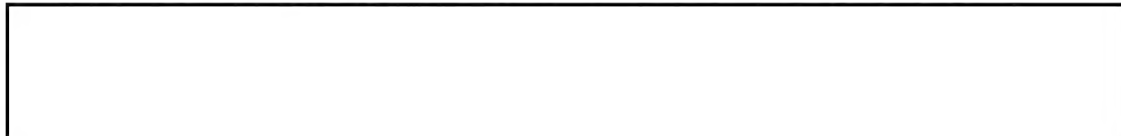
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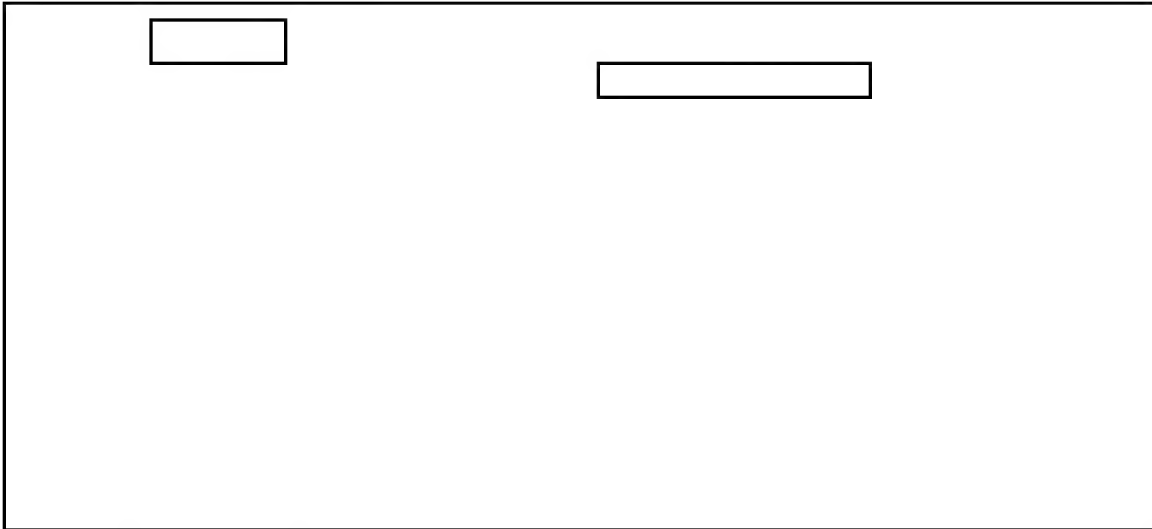
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SA-3s for Cuba?

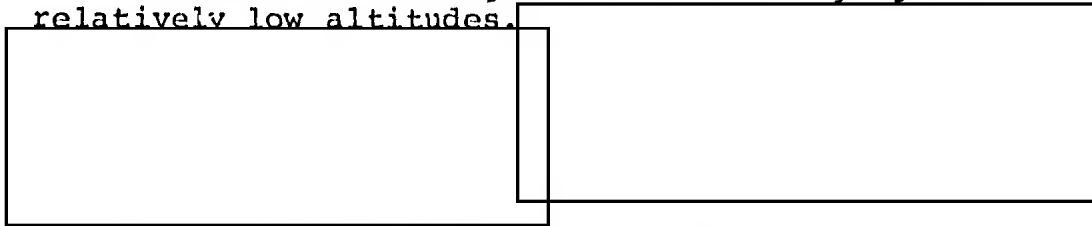


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The SA-3 is used against aircraft flying at relatively low altitudes.



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The Soviets have supplied SA-3 equipment to Warsaw Pact countries, North Vietnam, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt.

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Cuba: The Party is Immortal

The theme "man is mortal but the party is immortal" has been showing up more frequently in the Cuban press. Taken from a Castro speech, the phrase implies that the Cuban Revolution has become so institutionalized that Fidel's charismatic leadership is no longer essential. With the first party congress coming up late this year and government elections in 1976, the party may be trying to prepare the population for the possibility of Castro's resigning either his party or his government post.

A recent example of the theme appeared in the party daily on February 14. In the space usually reserved for ideological discussion, the daily recalled the premonitions of disaster that accompanied the news of the death of Lenin in 1924. In spite of the dire predictions of the collapse of the Communist movement that appeared in "the bourgeois press and imperialist news services," the people of the Soviet Union "closed ranks" and "a host of titans sustained unchanged the union of workers and peasants soviet republics...Lenin has died but his work lives on."

Although no attempt was made in the article to draw a direct parallel between Soviet and Cuban experience, there is a clear implication that should Fidel disappear from the scene, his Revolution will live on, sustained unchanged by a joint leadership "of titans." What is unclear, however, is the rationale for stressing the theme. A high party official has told a foreign journalist that both Fidel and President Dorticos will resign prior to next year's elections but there was no suggestion that either would not run for reappointment to his respective office. Although evidence is lacking, there is always the possibility that some condition of health unknown outside of top circles in Havana (and presumably Moscow) is forcing Castro to reduce his activity and let others take up the baton of leadership.

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Guatemala-UK-Belize: Softened Stance

Guatemala and Britain held talks in New York last month on the future of Belize, the self-governing British colony that Guatemala claims as its own. Details of the discussions are being kept secret, but judging from a press release issued by the Guatemalan Foreign Ministry, President Kjell Laugerud's government has softened the country's traditional hard line on Belizean independence.

The usual Guatemalan warning against unilateral declaration of independence by Belize was prominent, but with an interesting variation. Guatemala, the statement said, is trying to maintain peace in the region and to look for a constructive formula to solve the territorial dispute.

Guatemala continues to insist that it cannot agree to a grant of independence "behind its back," but apparently now is open to an approach that would give independence to Belize as part of an agreement involving Guatemala in some way in Belizean affairs.

One plan that Guatemala has previously mentioned involves taking control of Belizean territory south of 16 degrees 30 minutes north latitude. Such a plan would be unacceptable to Belize, but it may provide the impetus to begin talks on other access rights for Guatemala.

More evidence that the Guatemalans are rethinking their position was a statement that the problem is no longer merely a territorial dispute between the UK and Guatemala--the rights of the Belizean people and their expectation of self-determination must be acknowledged as well.

The problem now becomes one of convincing Premier George Price of Belize to accept some form of Guatemalan

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sovereignty. The chances for this are presently bleak if Price's oft-spoken words that "independence will come soon and will be total" are to be considered firm. He may, however, be more amenable to looking at alternatives if he detects Guatemala's position shifting to something less than acquisition of Belizean territory.

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Haiti: Stamp Scandal

The discovery of a major attempted swindle could have political repercussions reaching into the presidential palace. Influential Secretary of Commerce and Industry Serge Fourcand has been fired and faces criminal charges for his alleged involvement in a scheme to sell several million dollars worth of unauthorized Haitian stamps and pocket the proceeds. According to an official investigation, Fourcand and 15 others used forged documents to contract with a US firm for the printing and marketing of the stamps.

There may be good grounds for the charges against Fourcand, but political factors also unquestionably have played a role in his downfall. Despite his successes in policies such as developing closer ties with Caribbean neighbors and bargaining with US bauxite firms, his aggressive style and his influence with the President earned him powerful enemies. His successor in the cabinet apparently has ties to the conservative group which includes Duvalier's sister Marie-Denise, one of Fourcand's critics. Now that Fourcand is gone, the conservatives may try to discredit other "progressive" technocrats in the government.

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